GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4648
ANSWERED ON:23.04.2002
DEPLETION OF DRINKING WATER
BRIJLAL KHABRI;RAM SINGH KASWAN;RATTAN LAL KATARIA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that fresh drinking water is depleting fast all over the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to protect this so called blue gold ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL EVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A number of reasons like population explosion, over-exploitation of ground water, particularly in the irrigation sector, absence of any effective regulatory mechanism for controlled development of ground water, failure of monsoons and increasing demand for fresh-water as against the more or less fixed availabilities, are responsible for the depletion of ground water.

(c) In view of the fact that ground water is the principal source of rural drinking water supply, Government of India has been constantly advising the State Governments to enact legislation to control and regulate the development of ground water and to undertake water harvesting and conservation on a large scale, by utilising 5% of the allocation under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) which is exclusively earmarked for activities for sustainability of ground water, such as water harvesting, conservation and recharging.